

DELAURO HONORS THE "AMISTAD"  
AND CONNECTICUT'S ROLE IN  
THE UNDERGROUND RAILROAD

**HON. ROSA L. DeLAURO**

OF CONNECTICUT

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Friday, May 16, 1997*

Ms. DELAURO. Mr. Speaker, I am proud to join nearly 60 of my colleagues to introduce the National Underground Railroad Network to Freedom bill. This important measure will help to preserve historic stops on the Underground Railroad throughout the country so that we can remember and celebrate the courage of those who used the Underground Railroad in search of freedom from tyranny and oppression.

Slavery is not an easy chapter in our Nation's history to remember. But it should not be forgotten. And the Underground Railroad is especially important to remember and memorialize, because it helps us all to deal with this dark chapter in American history when men and women fought against the institution of slavery to further the cause of freedom, even at their own peril.

There are African-American churches in my hometown of New Haven, CT, such as the Varick AME Episcopal Church and the Dixwell Avenue Unitarian Church of Christ, that were waystations for escaped slaves traveling through the Underground Railroad. Many slaves passed through New Haven as they traveled toward freedom in more northern points such as Massachusetts, Rhode Island, and Canada. But many children growing up in New Haven today do not know of the role their town played in this chapter of our history.

In particular, New Haven was thrust into the center of the dispute between the forces supporting slavery and those working for freedom when the sailing ship *Amistad* arrived in the Long Island Sound in the summer of 1839. The *Amistad* was a slave ship that set sail from Havana, Cuba, on June 28, 1839, with 53 Africans who had been kidnapped from their homeland and were on their way to another Cuban port and a lifetime of slavery.

These brave Africans, led by Sengbe Pieh, fought for their lives and freedom. They took control of the ship and forced its Spanish owners to sail toward Africa, using the sun as their compass. However, the Spaniards sailed northward at night, hoping to come ashore in a Southern slave State. Instead, the ship entered the waters of the Long Island Sound and was taken into custody by the U.S. Navy.

The Africans were put in a New Haven jail while a court battle was waged to determine if they would be slaves or free men and women. This dispute forced the country to consider the moral, social, religious, and political questions surrounding slavery. Many members of the New Haven community pulled together to work to secure the Africans' freedom, including the congregation of the Center Church on Temple Street and students and faculty at the Yale University Divinity School. Finally, in February 1841 the Africans—who were defended by former President John Quincy Adams—were declared free by the U.S. Supreme Court.

In March 1841 the Africans of the *Amistad* moved to live in Farmington, CT, while funds were raised to finance their return to the area that is now Sierra Leone in Africa. The 37 surviving Africans finally reached their homeland in January 1842.

There are several memorials in New Haven commemorating the *Amistad* and the story of the brave Africans who fought for their liberty on its decks. A statue of Sengbe Pieh, who is also known as Joseph Cinque, sits in front of the city hall. Plans are underway for a life-size working replica of the ship to be docked on long wharf, with exhibitions and programs on African-American history and the long fight for true freedom.

I am glad to see this important part of Connecticut's history recognized. I am so proud to be an original cosponsor of this bill which will ensure that the monuments of the Underground Railroad's route in Connecticut and throughout the country will be protected and preserved so that future generations can remember this remarkable time in our history.

REVEREND DR. EDDIE ROBERT  
WILLIAMS, JR. HONORED

**HON. BOBBY L. RUSH**

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Friday, May 16, 1997*

Mr. RUSH. Mr. Speaker, I proudly rise today to pay tribute to a man of inspirational vision and stellar commitment. This is a man who has dedicated his life to the service of his community, and to the work of the Baptist Church. The man I am here to honor is the Reverend Dr. Eddie Robert Williams, Jr.

The work of Reverend Williams has touched the lives of area residents in many ways over the past 28 years. He assisted in the design, renovation, and development of new church facilities, and in the development and management of multifamily and senior citizen housing. In his professional life, Reverend Williams has been equally active in the service of his community. He reached tenure as a member of the Northern Illinois University [NIU] faculty in 1976, and has also achieved the rank of captain as the Navy's campus liaison officer at NIU.

Last but definitely not least, I am proud to announce that Reverend Williams will be installed as pastor of the South Park Baptist Church in Chicago, IL. I, along with several of his family and friends, will celebrate this joyous event later on this week. I am certain that Reverend Williams will follow in the footsteps of his father, the last Rev. Eddie Robert Williams, Sr., who was also pastor of South Park Baptist Church and a bedrock of our city, State, and Nation.

I am pleased to be here today to stand for Reverend Williams and to highlight his tireless work before the Congress.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

**HON. JERROLD NADLER**

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Friday, May 16, 1997*

Mr. NADLER. Mr. Speaker, on rollcall vote No. 136 I was erroneously recorded as voting "aye." I had intended to vote "nay." I would ask that the RECORD reflect that fact.

GREAT BRITAIN TO REJOIN  
UNESCO

**HON. ESTEBAN EDWARD TORRES**

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Friday, May 16, 1997*

Mr. TORRES. Mr. Speaker, on Wednesday, May 14, 1997, the Queen of England, in her speech at the opening of the British Parliament, announced that her Government will rejoin the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization [UNESCO].

This move by the new British Government demonstrates the further isolation of the United States from cooperative world efforts which seek to address common problems. The United Kingdom has left its longtime ally, the United States, alone among the industrial nations of the world, as a nonmember of UNESCO.

My colleagues may remember that 12 years ago, Great Britain joined with its longtime ally, the United States, and quit the Paris-based U.N. body in a protest orchestrated by the Reagan administration. The decision to quit UNESCO, in this Representative's opinion, reflected the then Reagan and Thatcher government's scorn for multilateralism and for consensus building. Building upon their distrust of the United Nations, lobbied by such groups as the Heritage Foundation, the Reagan administration set in motion a policy of what I call schoolyard diplomacy: You play by my rules or I take my ball home.

U.S. supporters of this withdrawal, explained that this move was based upon allegations of inefficiency and Third World bias. Their strategy was to bring about UNESCO reform by denying the organization U.S. dues funding and participation.

Those of my colleagues who have followed UNESCO progress know that a brilliant and innovative new Director General, Federico Mayor brought about the reforms which formed the premise for the withdrawal. You also know that the U.S. response was to remain outside of UNESCO, in spite of the profound changes enacted. The current reason given by the Clinton administration for continuing to remain outside of UNESCO is that "we don't have the money."

No world leader believes this contention. The world understands, instead, that the United States has lost its will to participate in the activities which link our educational, scientific and cultural leaders in common purpose with those of the UNESCO members. Perhaps more to the point, this administration appears to have given in to the right-wing paranoid of the Republican revolutionaries, who see black helicopters and conspiracies against our national sovereignty behind every effort to work cooperatively with members of the United Nations. Nervous about its coming conflict with the Majority party in Congress over United Nations reform issues, this administration has no stomach to face the potential which UNESCO offers this Nation, instead it hides behind protestation of poverty.

What is it that this Country loses because we are not a member of UNESCO? Recently, UNESCO Director General Federico Mayor personally went to Bilbao, Spain, last week to present the UNESCO/Guillermo Cano World Press Freedom Prize to an imprisoned Chinese journalist. We let Mr. Mayor face the threats of retaliation from China without our